

Public Hearing Testimony
Connecticut General Assembly
Appropriations Committee
February 20, 2017

Dear Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Win Evarts and I live in New Canaan with my wife and three children. My wife and I are the primary caregivers for our 26 year-old son, who has an intractable seizure condition and I/DD. I am testifying on the impact that the Governor's proposed budget will have on people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

The Governor's proposed budget has some good news for people with I/DD, notably the \$3.8 million investment in the ID Partnership, but also has some bad news that affects both individuals with I/DD and their families because the budget doesn't go far enough in emphasizing serving people with I/DD in the communities in which they live. For example, without the estimated \$7.5 million in funding for day and employment services for individuals with I/DD aging out of Connecticut's education system each year, it is highly possible that the developmental progress made during the school age years will be halted, resulting in a lack of pre-vocational training, community participation, and opportunities to develop in the adult environment. This lack of funding also places a burden on families in terms of increased support time and/or expense for the 6+ hours of the day that was previously spent at school. Day and employment services are an individual with I/DD's best way to enter the adult world by connecting them with their interests and empowering participation and contribution in a new setting. Connecticut does not need another growing Waiting List. Connecticut needs all of its citizens to be positively engaged in their communities, which is the expected result of day and employment programs. Please restore funding for day and employment services to individuals aging out of Connecticut's education system and enable people with I/DD to thrive in the communities they know and that know them. This \$7.5 million budget cost can be easily financed by reallocating a portion of the \$45 million of overtime paid out in DDS personnel expenses in 2016 while providing services in expensive licensed and institutional settings.

It is clear that the financial position of the state is necessarily under a microscope. Under these circumstances, I appreciate the difficult decisions

that your Committee must make in the coming months and thank you for your time and effort with this task.

Sincerely,

Win Evarts
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